

Title:	Sullivan Agent Confesses, [1948]		
Creator:	Robert Lindsay		
Dates of Material:	[1948]	Record Group Number:	RG 441
Summary of Contents:	<p>1 article on newsprint. This article contains a letter from Robert Lindsay who had been an organizer and leader of Pat Sullivan's union, the Canadian Lake Seamen's Union in the Port Colborne district. He accuses Sullivan and his men of stealing union dues and complains that the union does nothing to help the workers. He urges his fellow workers to join the Canadian Seamen's Union and to get rid of Pat Sullivan's company. There is also a photograph of Robert Lindsay alongside the article.</p>		
Physical Description / Condition:	This is a one-sided article which is slightly yellowed, and measures 25 cm. x 17 ½ cm.		
Other Notes:	<p>The National Seaman's Association was a labour recruiter hiding behind a union-like name. It was run by H.N. McMaster who collected fees from companies and dues from workers. With McMaster in charge, shipping interests could claim that their seamen had a union, but ship-owners were free to push their vessels and their workers to the breaking point.</p> <p>In 1935 the members on the Great Lakes decided to strike. One year later, they created their own union and amalgamated with a Montreal-based independent body to create the Canadian Seamen's Union headed by a ship's cook who became a union leader, John Allan Patrick "Pat" Sullivan. By the late 1940s almost all sailors on Canadian ships were CSU members.</p> <p>Right from its inception in 1936, Communists were prominent among the leaders of the union. Sullivan had been recruited to the Communist party that year and the union had a close rapport with</p>		

the party. On June 8, 1940 Pat Sullivan was arrested because of his affiliation with the Communist party. He was incarcerated until March 20, 1942. No charges were laid, no bail was set and there was no trial.

After his release, Sullivan was elected second vice-president of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada. In 1943 Percy Bengough was elected as president and Sullivan was elected as secretary treasurer of the TLC while maintaining his role as president of the CSU. On March 14, 1947 Sullivan made a shocking announcement that he was resigning from the CSU and the Labor-Progressive Party. He claimed that the CSU was under the full control of the Communists. Within a month of this announcement, he emerged as the president of the Canadian Lake Seamen's Union.

Ship-owners never really reconciled themselves to having their industry unionized, and in 1946 there was a seamen's strike in which the union won the eight-hour day. In 1949, the shipping companies had a plan to get rid of the union and were negotiating behind their back with the Seafarers International Union (SIU). In a brutal confrontation, led by Hal Banks, an American ex-convict, the SIU was able to roust the CSU and take over the bargaining rights of Canadian seamen.

On July 15, 1948, Robert Lindsay, who was Sullivan's Welland business agent said that to the best of his knowledge, Sullivan's outfit, the CLSU was under the control of some of the Steamship Companies. Lindsay had heard that there was a movement to get rid of Bengough of the Trades and Labour Congress as well as elements of the CSU. He also had heard that the CLSU wanted to affiliate with the American Federation of Labor. Lindsay's allegations raised the questions: Were the ship-owners powerful enough to oust Percy Bengough because he supported the seamen? Could the CLSU get an affiliation with the American Federation of Labor? and Would the American Federation of Labor actually affiliate with a union that was siding with employers against a locked-out union?

	<p>CLSU which is referred to in the letter stands for Canadian Lake Seaman's Union</p> <p>CSU stands for Canadian Seaman's Union</p> <p>SIU stands for Seafarer's International Union.</p> <p>TLC stands for Trades and Labor Congress</p> <p>Sources: http://www.answers.com/topic/seamen-s-unions</p> <p>http://www.socialisthistory.ca/Docs/CPC/WW2/FoughtFor.htm</p> <p><i>Everything that floats: : Pat Sullivan, Hal Banks, and the seamen's Unions of Canada</i> by Walter Kaplan</p> <p><i>Against the Tide: The story of the Canadian seamen's union</i> by Jim Green</p>
<p>Subject Headings:</p>	<p>100 Lindsay, Robert</p> <p>600 Sullivan, John Allan Patrick, d1896-</p> <p>610 Seafarers' International Union of North America</p> <p>610 Canadian Seamen's Union</p> <p>650 Shipping -- Great Lakes (North America) -- History</p> <p>650 Merchant mariners -- Labor unions -- Canada -- History</p>
<p>Location:</p>	<p>Brock University Archives</p>
<p>Related material:</p>	<p><i>Red Sails on the Great Lakes</i> by Pat Sullivan – Special Collections and Archives, HD 6528 S5 S8 1955</p> <p><i>Everything that floats: : Pat Sullivan, Hal Banks, and the seamen's unions of Canada</i> by Walter Kaplan, 9th floor, HD 6528 S42 S45 1987</p>

	<i>Against the Tide: The story of the Canadian seamen's union</i> by Jim Green, 9 th floor, HD 6528 S4 G74 1986		
Described by:	Anne Adams	Date:	April 16, 2013